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## Individual augmentees: A family's perspective

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The second in a series of Navy individual augmentee (IA) perspectives aired on Hawaii Navy News, a weekly program of the Honolulu Fox-affiliated KHON2 TV station on May 13 and is available online at [HTTP://bit.ly/KHONNavy](http://bit.ly/KHONNavy).

Focusing on a family's perspective, Master-at-Arms 1st Class (SW) David Taylor and his wife, Lindsay Hearne, talked about their experiences and the way they coped with the challenges of an IA deployment.

"I've been in the military for 15 years," said Taylor. "I've been on several different deployments. This is actually the first time I've been boots on the ground, actually there, actually involved where I should have been. It was very rewarding for my career."

An IA is a Sailor who is temporarily assigned to augment another command in support of overseas contingency operations. The Navy is sending IAs to assist commands in other branches of the service, primarily the Army and Marine Corps. These assignments are not on ships, but on the ground in places like Iraq and Afghanistan.

Taylor served in Kabul, Afghanistan and provided protective security services to the commanding general, International Security Assistance Forces/US Forces Afghanistan from December 2008 to July 2009. Taylor currently serves at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH) Security Department, where he is assigned to the harbor patrol unit.

There are some aspects of an IA deployment that present special challenges for Sailors and their families. These include relatively short notice of the deployment, deployments that are typically longer than Sailors are used to, training for the deployment that is different, and there may be an element of danger not associated with shipboard deployments.

"Basically, we worry for him every day, whether we are going to hear from him or not," said Hearne. "We see a lot of stories on the news. He's always telling me, don't look at the stories. You can see a lot of explosions, and it kind of puts a lot of fear in your heart because you want to make sure that your spouse comes home."

Taylor, who was deployed to Afghanistan for eight months, said what he missed most was the normal day-to-day life.

“When you’re moving around inside the country and you’re moving from place to place, there’s always the fear,” said Taylor. “You always have to be on your guard. You will always have to be what we call, ‘amped up and ready to go.’ I missed the day-to-day safety and normal day-to-day life - not having to worry about things blowing up or being shot at or things like that.”

Since the IA Sailor is deploying as an individual, and not with their unit, Sailors and their families may feel somewhat isolated from others in the command. Command ombudsmen help support IAs by providing a resource of information and opening the lines of communication between the spouses, Sailors and the command leadership. Hearne is currently the Navy’s ombudsman for JBPHH.

“I deal with a lot of IAs now,” said Hearne. “I try to get in contact with the spouses and family members every month to make sure that they’re ok and see if there’s anything they want to talk about, basically just having all your life matters in order.”

As of March, there are 10,504 Sailors serving in IA assignments. More than 4,000 Sailors are in the pre-deployment status and approximately 1,800 Sailors are in mission-specific training.

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